



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/550,239	09/23/2005	Alexander W. M. Bailey	080422-000000US	2209
20350 7590 08/21/2007 TOWNSEND AND TOWNSEND AND CREW, LLP TWO EMBARCADERO CENTER EIGHTH FLOOR SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94111-3834			EXAMINER TRAN, HANH VAN	
			ART UNIT 3637	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 08/21/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/550,239

Applicant(s)

BAILEY, ALEXANDER W. M.

Examiner

Hanh V. Tran

Art Unit

3637

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 July 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 4-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2, 4-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. The indicated allowability of claims 2, 4-18 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to USP 1,360,720 to Brown et al. Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow. Any inconvenience is regretted.

Claim Objections

2. Claims 2, 4-18 are objected to because of the following informalities: claim 18, line 7, "bearer portion" should be "bearer portions". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

5. Claims 2, 9-14, 16-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over PCT/AU85/00159 to Dash in view of USP 1,360,720 to Brown et al.

Dash discloses a metal pallet comprising a top deck 40, a bottom deck 21, at least two elongate bearers 13 securing said decks together, each bearer having a first

Art Unit: 3637

portion and a second portion (wherein the first and second portions are defined as the left and right hand sides of the bearer 13 in the assembled configuration such as shown in Fig 4), each portion extends between the decks and has a top web 35 and a bottom web 35 connected to a central web 32 by inclined portions 33-34, wherein at least one edge includes, such as shown in Fig 1, a cover plate, a stiffener and an end cap, wherein each said top and bottom deck is of a profiled configuration, wherein said profiled configuration are corrugations. The differences being that Dash fails to clearly disclose each bearer has a first and a second longitudinally extending bearer portions, with each portion being secured to said decks and extending separately transversely between said decks and wherein each portion has a longitudinally extending top web secured to the top deck, a longitudinally extending bottom web secured to the bottom deck, a longitudinally extending central web extending generally normal to said decks, and longitudinally extending inclined web portions securing the central web to the top and bottom webs, each inclined web portion being inclined to the decks by an acute angle, the central webs are releasably securable together.

Brown et al teaches the idea of providing a supporting bar/bearer comprising, such as shown in Figs 1 and 4, a first and a second longitudinally extending bearer portions (1,2), with each portion being secured to upper and lower decks (3,4) and extending separately transversely between said decks and wherein each portion has a longitudinally extending top web secured to the top deck 3, a longitudinally extending bottom web secured to the bottom deck 4, a longitudinally extending central web 5 extending generally normal to said decks and releasably securable together, and

Art Unit: 3637

longitudinally extending inclined web portions securing the central web to the top and bottom webs, each inclined web portion being inclined to the decks by an acute angle; wherein the bar's structure provides strong, yet lightweight supporting bar. Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify each bearer of Dash by having the bearer comprising a first and a second longitudinally extending bearer portions with each portion being secured to upper and lower decks and extending separately transversely between said decks and wherein each portion has a longitudinally extending top web secured to the top deck, a longitudinally extending bottom web secured to the bottom deck, a longitudinally extending central web extending generally normal to said decks and releasably securable together, and longitudinally extending inclined web portions securing the central web to the top and bottom webs, each inclined web portion being inclined to the decks by an acute angle in order to provide a strong, yet lightweight supporting bar, as taught by Brown et al, since both teach alternate conventional supporting bar structure, used for the same intended purpose of load-supported, thereby providing structure as claimed.

6. Claims 4-8, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dash, as modified, as applied to claim 18 above, and further in view of USP 4,240,360 to Sanders et al.

Dash, as modified, discloses all the elements as discussed above except for the webs are releasably secured to the decks by fastening means of threaded fasteners or rivets, and a sheet material secured to at least one of said decks.

Sanders teaches the idea of using releasable fastening means of rivets or removable clips for securing elements of a metal; wherein the releasable fastening means allows the pallet to knock-down for spaced saving purpose. Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify the structure of Dash, as modified, by providing releasable fastening means of threaded fasteners or rivets in order to allow the pallet to knock-down for spaced saving purpose, as taught by Sanders et al, since both teach alternate conventional pallet structure, used for the same intended purpose, thereby providing structure as claimed. In regard to a sheet secured to at least one of said decks, the examiner takes the position that it would have been obvious and well within the level of one skill in the art to provide at least one of the decks with a sheet secured thereto in order to provide a flat supporting deck, when so is desired. Further, it has been held that constructing a formerly integral structure in various elements involves only routine skill in the art.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Garbe, Vincens, and Navon all show structures similar to various elements of applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hanh V. Tran whose telephone number is (571) 272-6868. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, and alternate Friday.

Art Unit: 3637

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached on (571) 272-6867. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

HVT *HVT*
August 17, 2007

LANNA MAI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

